



Network of Excellence  
on Land Governance in Africa

# NELGA Good Practices Staff Exchange

The Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa (NELGA) is a **partnership of leading African universities and research institutions** with proven leadership in education, training and research on land governance. Currently NELGA has more than **70 partner institutions in over 40 countries** and is organized in 6 regional and 1 technical node supported by a Secretariat.

# The NELGA Staff Exchange Programme

Within the framework of the programme “Strengthening Advisory Capacities for Land Governance in Africa” (SLGA) the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) provides staff exchange fellowships for African universities and professionals. The programme aims to **improve the quality of training and research on land governance** in African universities by fostering South-South academic exchanges.

Six staff exchanges have been conducted since 2019, in this good practice we are going to present two of them.

Staff exchanges aim at improving learning on three different levels:

- ➔ Students **strengthen their knowledge** and are able to discover **new African perspectives** on their subject of study.
- ➔ Lecturers have the opportunity to **gain experience** and get familiar with **different education systems and learning methods**.
- ➔ Finally, this programme is contributing to the overall aim to strengthen research exchange between African institutions and thereby creating a **robust and modern research environment** in Africa.



# Implementation

Host Institution	Programme's Name	Level	No. of Students	Seminar Topic
<b>Dr Mediebou</b>				
OBU	DGSET	Master I	14	Mobility, transboundary exchange and dynamics of sub-regional integration in Central Africa: Case of the three frontiers of Kye-Ossi
OBU	DGSET	Master II	14	States, frontiers and transboundary threats in Central Africa
HTTC	History and Geography	Master II	60	The situation of land in Africa, problems of towns and urban disorder
OBU	DGSET	Master II pursuing internships	23	Land conflicts in the three frontiers zone of Kye-Ossi
<b>Dr Tende</b>				
INES Ruhengeri	Land Administration and Management	1B	51	Environmental Studies
		1A	47	
		1A+B	51+47	

During his stay at the OBU university, Dr Mediebou had the opportunity to teach several seminars at different levels of the DGSET Master. Her offered course on the topic of 'States, frontiers and transboundary threats in Central Africa' (for Master II students) aimed at showing students that the doctrine of cooperation and integration originated from the non-adaptation of the states to the new interdependence challenges.

The main objective of Dr Tende's course was "to enable learners to understand how our development and day-to-day activities affect the environment and how we are affected by changes in environmental conditions (...) This will enable learners at the end to solve complex global environmental problems by using different interdisciplinary tools and approaches".

**Dr Mediebou Chindji Rose**, from the University of Yaoundé I in Cameroon, visited the Omar Bongo University (OBU) and the Higher Teacher's Training College (HTTC) in Gabon. The target group of this exchange were the Master students of the 'Dynamics, Management and security of Trans-boundary Spaces' (DGSET) Professional Programme at OBU and 'History and Geography' Master students of the HTTC.



**Dr Tende Renz Tichafogwe**, also from the University of Yaoundé I in Cameroon, conducted an exchange at the INES Ruhengeri Institute in Musanze, Rwanda, teaching students of the Bachelor 'Land Administration and Management'.



## Further effects

Beyond the implementation of educational programmes, staff exchanges are also an opportunity for partner universities to exchange, strengthen their links and boost inter-institutional learning.

- The stay of Dr Mediebou thus ended with institutional meetings at OBU with the Departments of Geography and the Cooperation Management. It was the occasion to present the Department of Geography of the University of Yaoundé I and the NELGA as well as to discuss the setting up of a master's programme on land issues.
- Aside from his teachings, Dr Tende conducted a presentation on research methods as a public discussion on the linkage between environment and land administration.

As with every experience in another country, lecturers' exchanges went hand in hand with small challenges due to encountering new cultures or last-minute changes. Thanks to their flexibility, Dr Mediebou and Dr Tende have been able to adapt and proceed some spontaneous rescheduling in order to pursue their exchanges with success.

# Results

The teaching periods have been evaluated through different assessments and exams (conducted after or during the stay of the invited lecturer).

Out of the 98 students of Dr Tende, 90 received very good results (a catch up session will text place in January 2021 for those who did not passed the exam). Furthermore, "after the lecture session, the students were given an assessment sheet to evaluate the lectures and the results were excellent". A weekly report of activities was done and a final assessment given as proof of Dr Tende's service in Rwanda.

Dr Mediebou considers that "the results produced by the activities are satisfactory". In addition to exams, she also conducted oral summaries at the end of each seminar and kept an attendance list of classes. "All of these made the students to participate regularly and take down notes well while at the same time being interactive". A report of all Dr Mediebou's activities in Gabon has also been produced and distributed.



# Lessons learnt

Dr Tende and Dr Mediebou put forward how those exchanges constituted new enriching experiences both for them and for the students they have been able to meet. It was the opportunity for the two lecturers to become familiar with and learn from a different education system while offering to the students a new African perspective on the studied topics.

*“I had a new enriching experience by acquainting a new teaching system different from the one in Cameroon. Equipped class rooms with few student populations (...) The students got another approach to transboundary issues in Central Africa and testified to their satisfaction through the discussions that continue till today using emails and social media”.*

**Dr Tende, University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon**



*“This (experience) has greatly broadened my horizon. I am happy to say that the supervised students under my charge were alert and learned a great deal. They understood international experience on different environmental problems aside of their Rwandan background”.*

**Dr Mediebou, University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon**

An essential factor for the success of this experience has been the reception offered by the host institutions. Both Dr Mediebou and Dr Tende highlighted that the INES institution, OBU and the HTTC of Gabon offered them a warm and hospitable welcome as well as all the necessary conditions to conduct their lectures.

*“The NELGA Staff Exchange Programme in a south to south cooperation happens to be one of the best encounters I have had as a researcher”.*

**Dr Tende, University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon**

# Conclusion

**Students strongly benefited** from this exchange programme and the two lecturers both noted the positive implications of the students during these exchanges. Dr Mediebou continues the knowledge sharing experience with the students through discussions by e-mail and social media, contact with delegates of the different classes, information sharing on the NELGA or advice query on the students' research topics and projects.

On personal and institutional level, those exchange programmes also offer an opportunity to contribute to stronger cooperation and the sustainable scientific development of higher education system in the sub-region.

Since Dr Mediebou's stay at OBU University, the project to create a master's degree in land governance has made significant progress. He will finally be accommodated after a favorable opinion from the university authorities within the Department of Geography. As soon as classes resume in October 2020, the official formalization process of the Master will be finalized, followed by the holding of educational design meetings. DAAD financial support will be requested.

*"The students had an opportunity to (...) share the problems of African nations and think of the way forward. The staff exchange programme organized by DAAD has its 'raison d'être' (...) the programme should continue and extend to various higher institutions of learning, to enhance knowledge and impact lives positively in Africa and the world at large".*

**Dr Tende, University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon**

*"This mobility, financed by SLGA and implemented by DAAD, made it possible for different selected teachers to share their knowledge through fruitful and beneficial exchange of experiences as much as for countries of origin and receiving countries".*

**Dr Mediebou, University of Yaoundé I, Cameroon**



## NELGA

The **Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa (NELGA)** is a partnership of leading African universities and research institutions with proven leadership in education, training and research on land governance. It strengthens capacities and knowledge exchange at more than 70 partner institutions across Africa.

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